

U.S. Denies License For S. Africa Plane

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A \$1.5 million aircraft shipment to South Africa that brought storm warnings from U.N. Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg has been quietly turned down by the Commerce Department.

An export license for the shipment was denied only after Rep. Barratt O'Hara (D-Ill.) complained of it at congressional hearings.

Although they were civilian planes, O'Hara contended they could easily have been put to military use by South Africa's white supremacist government.

O'Hara, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, described the shipment as "a deal that almost went through. I think they were about to okay it."

O'Hara, who was a member of the U.S. delegation to the U.N. last fall, said Goldberg told him of the proposed shipment last month. The Ambassador, he said, protested that it "would have made liars out of both of us."

Shipments Blocked

The Congressman said both he and Goldberg boasted at the U.N. last fall that the United States had not only maintained its embargo on arms for South Africa but had also blocked \$60 million worth of commercial shipments that could have been turned to military use.

O'Hara feels that all plane shipments ought to be rejected in line with this policy. "The planes that were used in the Congo were civilian planes, too," he told a reporter.

Alexander Trowbridge, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for International Business, told the Subcommittee last week, however, that plane shipments can be approved if

their "possible end use" appears to be innocuous.

In 1964, the Commerce Department approved \$393 million worth of exports to South Africa, including \$4.9 million worth of aircraft and aircraft equipment.

After O'Hara complained of the plane sale, tight-lipped officials at Commerce refused to discuss the shipment in question for several days. They then said it had been turned down, apparently late last week.

Declines to Answer

Rauer H. Meyer, Export Control Director of Commerce, would describe the planes only as "small, non-military aircraft." The shipment, he said, had been "under consideration for some time," but was rejected because "we concluded that the proposed use would have been inconsistent with U.S. commitments to the (1963) U.N. resolution" calling for the arms embargo.

Meyer wouldn't say what the proposed use was. He also refused to give out the name of the company that wanted to make the shipment, the date the export license was requested and the date it was denied.

O'Hara said he had been told, by another source, that "the planes were made in Massachusetts." He said he understood "one of the senators from Massachusetts" had "expressed an interest" in the transaction.

"The first I've heard of it," said Sen. Leverett Saltonstall (R-Mass.).

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) could not be reached for comment despite repeated attempts. His aides said they checked office correspondence, checked with the Senator and "drew a blank."